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# Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits

Ignatius, the Popes,  
and Realistic Reverence

*John W. Padberg, S.J.*

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# THE SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

A group of Jesuits appointed from their provinces in the United States.

The Seminar studies topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially American Jesuits, and communicates the results to the members of the provinces. This is done in the spirit of Vatican II's recommendation to religious institutes to recapture the original inspiration of their founders and to adapt it to the circumstances of modern times. The Seminar welcomes reactions or comments in regard to the material which it publishes.

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# Ignatius, the Popes, and Realistic Reverence



John W. Padberg, S.J.

**Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits**  
**25/3: May 1993**





## *For your information . . .*

"Jesuits are on the move." That remark is true both institutionally and personally. In the first sense, the Society is moving toward its next general congregation, to be held early in 1995. As a possible aid to members of the Society preparing for that congregation, editors here at the Institute of Jesuit Sources are readying a translation of all the decrees of past general congregations. We have such translations, of course, for the last three such meetings, but not for earlier ones. We shall accompany that translation with a somewhat revised edition of "A Short History of the General Congregations," which first appeared in 1974 as a double issue of *STUDIES*.

Three members of the Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality—John Breslin, John Donahue, and John Foley—are also on the move after completing their terms on the Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality. The spring meeting of the seminar always includes the bittersweet experience of saying goodbye to members who for the past three years have helped both to carry on from the past the traditions of the seminar and to assure its future and the future of this journal, *STUDIES*. I am sure that while expressing my thanks to them I echo also the thanks of our readers.

In another sense, those three members have been on the move, exemplifying in their own lives a phenomenon increasingly common both in the Society of Jesus and in American society in general, the trend not to stay permanently at one task or in one place over the course of a working lifetime. Jesuits are supposed to be mobile, often physically and certainly psychologically. Increasingly they are. For instance, just in the course of their three years as seminar members, all three of our departing members have experienced or will experience such changes of responsibility or place or both. John Breslin continues to work at Georgetown University, but he has gone from the university press to being university chaplain. John Donahue continues to teach New Testament studies, but the site of his apostolate has changed from the University of Notre Dame to the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley. John Foley will undergo changes in both place and work: after completing his doctoral studies at the Graduate Theological Union, he will become director of a new Center for Liturgical Studies at Saint Louis University. Jesuits are on the move.

At the same time, in the context of movement and change some values remain constant even if the way of expressing them may vary. How realistic reverence, part of the subject of this present issue of STUDIES, might best be expressed today may well be in part the same as and in part different than it was at the time of St. Ignatius. A previous issue of STUDIES explored the subject very well. Charles E. O'Neill, S.J., the director of the Jesuit Historical Institute in Rome, wrote a STUDIES essay in 1976 entitled "*Acatamiento: Ignatian Reverence in History and in Contemporary Culture.*" Back issues are still available and the subject is still relevant.

*John W. Padberg, S.J.*

*Editor*

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# Ignatius, the Popes, and Realistic Reverence

## Introduction

**T**he relationship of Ignatius of Loyola to the popes of his time might at first seem very simple. After all, the phrase "to serve the Lord alone and the Church, His spouse, under the Roman Pontiff, the vicar of Christ on earth" stands near the beginning of the Formula of the Institute of the Society of Jesus, and the set of rules for thinking with the Church stands near the end of the *Spiritual Exercises*.<sup>1</sup> They are hallowed phrases in Jesuit

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<sup>1</sup> Saint Ignatius of Loyola, "The Formula of the Institute of the Society of Jesus," *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, ed. and trans. with commentary by George E. Ganss, S.J. (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970), [3]. Saint Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, ed. and trans. with commentary by George E. Ganss, S.J. (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992), §352. Hereafter references to the Constitutions will be cited as *Constitutions*, references to the Formula as "Formula," references to the *Spiritual Exercises* as *SpEx*.

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history. Add to them the near-legendary "fourth vow" of obedience to the pope,<sup>2</sup> all of these the work of Ignatius, and there is no wonder that one might so judge. But such is not the case. What has recently been said of the Exercises, that "we have almost nothing in English on how the *Spiritual Exercises* came to be composed,"<sup>3</sup> can in a sense also be said of how "thinking with the Church" and "serving the Lord alone and the Church . . . under the Roman Pontiff" came to mean what they did for Ignatius as he expressed that meaning in action. This indeed may be true to a degree in other languages also, especially if one were to apply to them, as we do to English, the new historiography on sixteenth-century Catholicism, recent studies of the relationships between experience and language, and the continuing study of the history of the Society, and were to employ as well all the tools of contemporary social sciences and hermeneutics. The subject of this presentation, then, demands a historical study which is too vast, too complicated, too nuanced for this simple and brief paper. What we have here is only a beginning, and it only deals in a very general way with a very limited range of historical material.

The paper will consist of four sections. The first is entitled "Context and Early Years." This section describes briefly a specific context, the series of popes who were contemporaries of Ignatius. They, of course, were not the Church universal, but they were at its head and as such at the head of the Holy See. As that term is commonly used, "it denotes the Papacy, especially in reference to its authority, jurisdiction and functions of government which attach to it."<sup>4</sup> The papacy included the curia through which the pope

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<sup>2</sup> The actual text of that vow is quite simple and hardly the stuff of legend: "I further promise a special obedience to the sovereign pontiff in regard to the missions according to the same apostolic letters [of the papacy to the Society] and the Constitutions" (*Constitutions*, [527]).

<sup>3</sup> Philip Endean, S.J., "Discerning Behind the Rules: Ignatius' First Letter to Teresa Rejadell," *The Place of Discernment, The Way*, Supplement 64 (Spring, 1989), 37.

<sup>4</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), 659.

acted. But we should remember that the bureaucratic structure of curial congregations and offices that today make up the Holy See did not as yet exist in Ignatius's time; it emerged from the legislation of Sixtus V. The Holy See was in Ignatius's day much more a network of personal relationships among individuals who held offices. The person who stood at its apex in symbol and activity was the pope. He set the tone for it; and so, in describing the papacy in the time of Ignatius, this section of the essay concentrates on very brief descriptions of the activities and reputations of the popes. The second section of the paper, "The Founding Years [of the Society], 1537–1540," will deal with Ignatius and the founding fathers in Rome during those years. The third section of the paper will deal with "Ignatius as General of the Society." This will treat of him no longer as a private person but as general of a religious order and representative of his brethren and of the Society as a corporate entity. Here he appears as principal actor in certain specific relations with the Holy See. The last section of the paper will present several questions and conclusions for the present.

## **1. Context and Early Years**

### **The Popes in the Lifetime of Ignatius**

The undoubted reverence of Ignatius for the Holy See and for the person of the pope can be seen as all the more remarkable if one recalls the activities and reputation of the popes and their curia in the lifetime of Ignatius, from 1491 to 1556. Of course, in the early years of his life, he did not know those circumstances; but later, as a man aware of the world and its ways, it would have required a miracle of ignorance for him not to be increasingly cognizant of the activities and reputations of pope and curia. There were, undoubtedly, great and good Christians throughout the Church and in Rome and in the Roman Curia during those sixty-five years of Ignatius's life. At the same time, however, we know from Church history that, during the last half of the fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth century, pope and curia were, for the

most part, held in ill repute, and often deservedly so. It is important to recall how justified that reputation was by briefly mentioning those eleven popes who reigned during those sixty-five years.

When Ignatius was born in 1491, Innocent VIII was coming near the end of his eight-year reign. He had earlier had several illegitimate children, one of them marrying the sister of Giovanni de' Medici, who then was appointed a cardinal and later became Pope Leo X. Innocent had been elected through simony, was an unabashed nepotist, stimulated the witchcraft mania in Germany, and at his death left the Papal States in anarchy. He was succeeded in 1492 by Alexander VI, who also bought his way to the papacy. From a very early age, thanks to his cardinal-uncle, later Callistus III, Rodrigo Borgia was a pluralist holder of bishoprics. He was utterly licentious in his life, a man whose greatest passions were gold, women, and his relatives. He had several mistresses, and by one of them he had his four most famous children, Juan, Lucrezia, Cesare (who probably murdered his brother Juan), and, last of all, Goffredo. Juan was the great-grandfather of Saint Francis Borgia. So bad was Alexander's reputation that it was widely believed that his daughter Lucrezia was at the same time his incestuous mistress. There is good reason to believe that, when he died at a banquet, he had fallen victim to the poison that he had intended for the cardinal who was his host. Pius III succeeded him for twenty-eight days in 1503.

Julius II, who had long intrigued for the papacy, next became pope that same year. At the age of eighteen he had already been a bishop and cardinal, made so by his uncle Sixtus IV. While he was a cardinal, he had three illegitimate daughters. By lavish bribes he attained to the papacy. He was ruthless and violent, a warrior who drove the French from Italy. He summoned the Fifth Lateran Council, but had no real interest in reform. He was a generous and perceptive patron of the arts and of artists such as Michelangelo, Raphael, and Bramante. To his great credit, he consolidated the Papal States and restored the independence and the treasury of the papacy; perhaps learning from his own case, he imposed a strict ban on simony in papal elections, a ban not always



observed in later years. He in turn was succeeded in 1513 by Leo X, the first of the Medici popes, well educated, a cardinal at the age of thirteen, a decent man, but easygoing, pleasure-loving, and extravagant. Within two years as pope he spent almost all of the fortune that his predecessor had amassed. To finance his extravagances he sold offices right and left, including, as his predecessors had done, the cardinalatial dignity. Some of his own appointees even tried to poison him. At that point he did choose several men who were later to become outstanding cardinals. Above and beyond all else he put the family interests of the Medici. The Fifth Lateran Council concluded during his reign, setting out a program of reform that he took few steps to implement. At the death of Leo X, Italy was in turmoil, the Holy See was mired in debt, and the Protestant Reformation—of whose real importance he was oblivious—was under way in Germany. In the latter years of Julius II and through the reign of Leo X, Ignatius was leading a less-than-edifying life in Spain. Adrian VI, the former tutor of Emperor Charles V, next became pope in 1522. Adrian was the great hope for reform in the Church, but officials of the Holy See and members of the papal curia were violently opposed to him, because such reform would have curtailed their incomes and their privileges. Unfortunately, Adrian died within less than a year and the hope of reform died with him. In 1521 Ignatius had been wounded at Pamplona, and most of that year of 1522 he spent at Manresa.

Clement VII, the second of the Medici, became pope in 1523. He was the cousin of the earlier Leo X, had no real recognition of the spiritual revolution going on in the Church, and was inconstant, changing sides regularly as France and Spain warred over Italy. He had to endure the sack of Rome in 1527. That awful event, which left him a prisoner for six months, many regarded as a judgment of God on the wickedness of papal Rome. Clement obstinately refused to call the general council increasingly demanded by voices within the Church. The years of his reign were those in which Ignatius studied at Barcelona, Alcalá, Salamanca, and Paris and gathered around himself the first “companions in the Lord.”

Fortunate was the Church, the ten companions who were to be the Society of Jesus, and Ignatius himself in the man chosen in 1534 to be the new pope, Paul III. This would not have been immediately evident from his earlier life and even from some of his first actions as pope. Alessandro Farnese was already a cardinal at the age of twenty-five in 1493. The sobriquet given to him was "the petticoat cardinal," because his sister, "la bella Giulia," reputedly the most beautiful woman in Rome, was another of the mistresses of Alexander VI, who created Farnese a cardinal. He was much like the usual Renaissance prince, with his mistress by whom he had three sons and a daughter, and with the requisite palace to reflect glory on himself and his family. He was appointed a bishop in 1509, though he was not yet ordained a priest. From about 1513 on, he began to take his responsibilities seriously and was ordained in 1519. He served four popes, twice came close to being elected to that office himself, and finally attained it in 1534. Paul III continued to be in many ways a Renaissance prince, even after his election as pope. Balls, feasts, and the carnival—the last of which he once again reinstated, to the great delight of the Romans—were aspects of his reign. With nepotism one of the curses of the Church, the creation of his first group of cardinals caused both joy at the high quality of many of the nominees and dismay when he included among them two of his grandsons, though they were no more than fourteen and seventeen years of age. He effectively gave away to his son and his family the Church territories of Parma and Piacenza when he created there an hereditary duchy for the family. But all of the shadows finally pale into insignificance in contrast to his convocation of the Council of Trent, his creation of other excellent prelates, and, of course—momentous for the Jesuits and, according to the general judgment of historians, for the whole Church—his formal approval of the Society of Jesus.

It was during the fifteen-year reign of Paul III from 1534 to 1549 that the decisive steps in the foundation and consolidation of the Society of Jesus took place. We should recall here that Paul III's election year, 1534, was also the year of the vows at Montmartre. This event did not produce the full-fledged Society of Jesus; but for



the first time the pope appears in the plans of these companions in the Lord. If they could not spend their lives in the Holy Land, they would put themselves at the disposal of the pope, the Vicar of Christ, because he had the most all-encompassing knowledge of where best they might engage in the ministry of "helping souls."

But Ignatius lived on beyond this reign and beyond that of the next pope, Julius III, who was pope from 1550 to 1555. Like his predecessors, he was a patron of the arts and a Renaissance prince interested at best in piecemeal reforms; by his public and scandalous infatuation with a teenage street boy whom he had picked up somewhere, forced his brother to adopt, and made cardinal, Julius became the talk of a Rome not easily surprised. Yet this was also the pope who in 1550 in the papal bull *Exposcit debitum* again confirmed the Society quite definitively in its Institute and who in the next two years made it possible for Ignatius to found those great instruments of reform, the Roman College and the German College. The next pope, Marcellus II, the "good Pope Marcellus" of Ignatian legend, the hope of everyone seriously interested in reform, as Adrian VI had also been, had an even-shorter reign than the latter. After twenty-one days as pope, he died. It was a great tragedy for the Church.

From 1555 to 1559, that is, for the last year of Ignatius's life and for three years beyond, Gian Pietro Carafa reigned as Paul IV. He was the cofounder of the Theatines, a man with whom in earlier years Ignatius had had disagreements in Venice and whose proposal to amalgamate the Jesuits with his Theatine order Ignatius had declined. Paul was seventy-nine years old when elected, learned and incorruptible, undoubtedly and genuinely reform-minded. But he was also a self-willed, stubborn, intolerant, short-sighted, harsh autocrat with a fierce hatred of almost everything Spanish, in part because of the Spanish hegemony over his native Naples. Ignatius, of course, and many of the early Jesuits were Spanish. So fanatically severe was he that he even put into prison as suspect of heresy Cardinal Morone, one of the most ardent of reformers and one of the presidents of the Council of Trent. So blind was he in his nepotism that he raised to the cardinalatial

dignity two of his utterly worthless nephews, men whom everyone knew to be worthless and who so lived up to their reputation that the next pope had them executed for crimes ranging from fraud to murder. Paul IV also reinforced the Roman Inquisition in all its severity and forced the Jews of Rome into the ghetto, from which they definitively emerged only at the time of the French Revolution. No wonder that Ignatius became briefly but deeply perturbed when he heard of Carafa's election as pope. At one point Paul IV went so far as to send a search party to the Jesuit headquarters to look for arms, and Ignatius insisted that they look everywhere. They found nothing, of course. When he died, the Roman populace tore down his statues and set his prisoners free. There is no question, however, that Paul IV moved what might have been described as Catholic Reform into what came to be known as the Counter-Reformation.

These were the popes during whose reigns Ignatius lived out his life. Almost uninterruptedly up to Paul III they were examples of worldliness, nepotism, venality, and license; and their examples set the tone for the Roman Curia and for the reputation of the Holy See. It would take pages to describe even in brief detail how bad the situation was. Suffice it to say that everyone knew that "everything was for sale in Rome"; in addition, several families were firmly in control of passing on the spoils one to another through nepotism. For example, through the latter half of the fifteenth and on into the sixteenth century, "four families occupied the papal throne nine different times, the clique established by Sixtus IV being the most successful with three pontificates."<sup>5</sup> Paul III began to change the climate of Rome and the papacy; Julius III in many respects returned it to its previous reputation. Even Paul IV, while swinging wildly back to the opposite extreme of rigor, could only begin to bring the curia out of the practices in which all too many of its members had indulged too comfortably; he could only begin to reestablish the reputation of the Holy See for serious-

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<sup>5</sup> Bernhard Schimmelpfennig, *The Papacy*, trans. James Sievert (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 243.

ness, a seriousness which, as embodied in some of the followers of Paul IV and in Paul himself, bordered on fanaticism.

### **Ignatius Before 1537**

Anyone wishing to be pious might say that Ignatius's first contact with the papacy was on June 28, 1521, the vigil of SS. Peter and Paul and also the most critical day of his convalescence after receiving a wound at Pamplona. Ignatius tells the story in his autobiography. "The doctors said that if he did not feel any improvement by midnight, he could be taken for dead. It happened that this sick man was devoted to St. Peter, so Our Lord deigned that he should begin to get better that very midnight. His improvement proceeded so well that some days later it was judged that he was out of danger of death."<sup>6</sup> Of course, that bare recital later took on a certain amount of embroidery in which St. Peter supposedly appeared to Ignatius and personally restored him to health. This story got greater currency in the Spanish version of Ribadeneira's life of Ignatius, where the author reported, "And thus it is understood that this glorious apostle appeared to him in that same night at his greatest necessity."<sup>7</sup>

The first instance in which the Holy See entered directly into the life of Ignatius was during his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1523. The story is familiar. He landed there on August 31; arrived in Jerusalem on September 4; visited the holy places in the city, in Bethlehem, in Jericho, and at the River Jordan; and returned to

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<sup>6</sup> Saint Ignatius of Loyola, "The Autobiography," *Ignatius of Loyola: Spiritual Exercises and Selected Works*, ed. George E. Ganss, S.J., trans. Parmananda R. Divarkar, S.J. (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1991), §3. Hereafter Ignatius's autobiography will be cited as "Autobiography."

<sup>7</sup> Pedro de Ribadeneira, S.J., *Vita Ignatii Loyolæ*, ed. Cándido do Dalmases, S.J., vol. 4 of *Fontes Narrativi de S. Ignatio de Loyola . . .*, vol. 93 of *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu* (Rome: Historical Institute of the Society of Jesus, 1965), 85. The Latin version is more circumspect than the Spanish version quoted above. To describe Peter's presence it uses the word "adesse," which does not necessarily imply an apparition. Hereafter the *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu* series will be cited as MHSI.



Jerusalem in the middle of September. There he prepared his plan to "remain in Jerusalem continually, visiting those holy places; and in addition to this devotion, he also planned to help souls."<sup>8</sup> The Franciscan provincial denied his request; the pilgrim insisted; the provincial told him he could excommunicate him if he remained without permission and offered to show Ignatius the papal bulls giving him this authority. Ignatius accepted the decision of the provincial, because thus he "realized that it was not God's will that he remain in Jerusalem."<sup>9</sup> So he returned to Spain and began his studies at Barcelona, again so that he might help souls.

As a student at Alcalá in 1526 and 1527, Ignatius encountered the first three of the eight legal processes to which he said he was subjected in the years from now up until just before the foundation of the Society itself.<sup>10</sup> This was not an encounter with the papacy or the Holy See as such, of course, but rather with the Spanish Inquisition. He accepted the sentences handed down on June 1, 1527, about the clothing he and his early companions were to wear and about not talking or teaching about matters of Christian doctrine before they had finished four years of study. But he "could not reconcile himself to the idea that his interrogators were closing the door against his being able 'to help souls,' and this for the sole reason that he had not studied."<sup>11</sup> He went to the archbishop of Toledo to appeal the decision and told him he would do whatever the archbishop wanted. By that time Ignatius had already

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<sup>8</sup> "Autobiography," §45.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, §50.

<sup>10</sup> Saint Ignatius of Loyola, *Epistolæ et instructiones*, Monumenta Ignatiana, series 1, 12 vols., MHSI (Madrid and Rome: Historical Institute of the Society of Jesus, 1964–68) 1:296–98. Hereafter the letters of Ignatius will be cited as *EppIgn. Narrationes scriptæ ante annum 1557*, ed. Dionisio Fernández Zapico, S.J., and Cándido de Dalmases, S.J., vol. 1 of *Fontes Narrativi*, Monumenta Ignatiana, vol. 66 of MHSI, (Rome: Historical Institute of the Society of Jesus, 1943), 50–54.

<sup>11</sup> Cándido de Dalmases, S.J., *Ignatius of Loyola, Founder of the Jesuits*, trans. Jerome Aixala, S.J. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985), 101.

decided to leave Alcalá and go to Salamanca. The archbishop encouraged him and gave him alms.

Ignatius left Alcalá in July of 1527 and went to Salamanca. He was not twelve days in Salamanca when the same kind of problem arose. After a meeting full of questions and conversation on theology with the Dominicans, Ignatius, knowing that his interlocutors had no authority over him, replied, "Father, I will say nothing more than what I have said, unless it be in the presence of superiors who can oblige me to speak."<sup>12</sup> He was arrested, again thrown into prison, and interrogated formally and at great length on his theological and moral teachings and on the pattern of his life. Ignatius gave the examiners his papers, essentially the early Exercises, for examination. After twenty-two days he was cleared and released and given permission to teach again and to give spiritual instructions. But the court silenced him in the matter of the distinction between venial and mortal sins in moral theology and spiritual direction. He could talk on this only on condition that he complete four years of study. Ignatius protested the sentence, called it illogical, but promised to observe it as long as he was in Salamanca. Therefore "he decided to go to Paris to study."<sup>13</sup> In September 1527 he left for Paris, arriving there on February 2, 1528.

In the summer of 1529, several people in Paris delated Ignatius to the authorities, this time as a corrupter of youth and a potential heretic. The men principally responsible here were the eminent doctor of theology, Pedro Ortiz, later a good friend of the Society, but at this time thoroughly opposed to Ignatius as a dangerous man, and Diego de Gouveia, principal of the College of Ste. Barbe. Three young men had listened to Ignatius's teaching, made the Exercises, and decided to "flee the world." Ignatius first went directly to the inquisitor in Paris, this time also a Dominican, who acknowledged the complaints but said he would take no action. The authorities did not press the charge. Sometime later, however,

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<sup>12</sup> "Autobiography," §66.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, §71.



Gouveia decided to make an example of Ignatius, supposedly because he did not obey and led others to flout the house rules about being present for the prescribed disputations on Sunday mornings. Ignatius could choose to be humiliatingly and painfully flogged by four of the "masters" or refuse to accept that and be expelled from the college. He thought about suffering in this way for Christ but also thought about the scandal to the other students. So he went to Gouveia and explained his situation. Gouveia in turn canceled the public punishment and became a fast friend of the Society.

In March 1535 Ignatius was denounced to the Paris inquisitor.<sup>14</sup> Again on his own he went directly to the inquisitor and asked for a judgment. The inquisitor asked for a copy of the *Exercises*. After examining them he praised them, but that was not enough for Ignatius. He went to a government notary and got a written, officially notarized copy of the commendation of the inquisitor. This combination of direct, personal approaches, insistence on legal formalities, and explicit vindication was to characterize his later dealings in Rome with members of the papal curia.

None of these previous cases directly involved the Holy See; but in 1536 and 1537, when Ignatius was twice denounced in Venice before Veralo, the papal legate, the Holy See did enter the case. The first involved Ignatius and the *Spiritual Exercises*. Later others lodged another complaint in the context of the spiritual conversations that he was conducting in that city. His assailants accused him of having fled Spain and France and even having been burned in effigy in Paris because of heresy. True to form, Ignatius asked for a formal process and investigation, as a result of which he received in January 1537 a testimony to his orthodoxy. Recall, too, that after this process, in seeking papal permission in 1537 to go to the Holy Land, all the companions except Ignatius went to Rome. He stayed in Venice because, realistically, he feared his presence would impede their request, due to the opposition which he anticipated

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., §86. Polanco also notes this incident in his "Sumario de las cosas . . .," *Narrationes scriptæ*, §50 (p. 180).

from Dr. Ortiz of Paris and the newly created Cardinal Carafa. Fortunately, not only was Ortiz not hostile but he was positively helpful in getting for the companions an audience with Paul III.

## **2. The Founding Years, 1537–1540**

In November 1537 Ignatius, Favre, and Laínez arrived in Rome. On the way Ignatius had had the experience of La Storta; despite the consolation and certitude it brought, however, as they reached Rome he told those accompanying him that he had seen "the windows there closed" against them. But the reception they received was, as a matter of fact, very favorable, and they quickly began to engage in the apostolates of preaching, charitable works, and the Exercises.

In the Lent of 1538 Laínez and Favre, who at the Pope's order were teaching at the Sapienza, the University of Rome, went to hear the sermons of a prominent Augustinian preacher, Agostino Mainardi, who, to their astonishment, was preaching Lutheran doctrine. They remonstrated with him, but he and his friends in the papal curia began to spread rumors about the supposed heretical tendencies and disedifying lives of the "Parisian masters," including Ignatius. These opponents attempted to turn the cardinal-legate in Rome against them and to persuade him not to grant them permanent faculties for their apostolates. It did not work; the companions received the requested permission to preach and hear confessions everywhere, even in Rome itself. And so they continued their ministries.

But then the most serious of accusations fell upon them. Mainardi managed to get three of his friends, influential members of the papal curia, to spread rumors anew around the curia and around the city that these "reformed priests" were themselves really disguised Alumbrados or Lutherans who were teaching those heresies, that they had been sought out for trial because of their immoral lives and erroneous beliefs, that they were founding a new religious order without papal approval, and that their ring-

leader, Ignatius, was infamous for his shameful life and actions. The three curialists even got witnesses to testify to the charges. Their best ally was Miguel Landivar, a former servant of Xavier in Paris, who had joined the first ten companions and then left the group and turned into an enemy. This brought on a battle that lasted almost eight months. The slander spread like quicksilver. Friends deserted Ignatius. The rumors went around that he and his companions would be banished, or spend the rest of their lives as prisoners in the papal galleys, or even end up on the pyre. Cardinal Gian Domenico DeCupis, dean of the College of Cardinals, advised their first host to expel the companions from his house. Ignatius saw how serious the affair was. He went directly to the cardinal, whom he convinced of his innocence and who became a good friend then and later. But Ignatius was even more decisive. He personally sought out the papal governor of Rome, Benedetto Conversini, and asked for a trial. He demanded that his accusers be summoned. With him he brought an earlier letter from Landivar full of praise and admiration for Ignatius and his companions. The formal depositions exposed the slanders. Landivar was tossed out of Rome. Thus in May 1538 ended the first phase of the battle.

A month later, in June, news had reached Spain that the Parisian masters were regarded in Rome as heretics. Again Ignatius demanded a formal process and cited his accusers, the three officials of the Holy See, by name. This produced no results. He tried another one of the Roman courts; again there were no results because the curial slanderers were able to stop any proceedings, especially any formal judicial summons. Ignatius was stubborn and would not give up. Again he approached the cardinal-legate and the papal governor. The ringleaders were summoned to court, where they professed total ignorance and absolute innocence of the whole affair and praised Ignatius and his friends.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> This whole process is described and documented in M. del Piazzo and Cándido de Dalmases, "Il processo sull'ortodossia de S. Ignazio e dei suoi compagni svoltosi a Roma nel 1538," *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 38 (1960): 431-53.



At this point both the legate and the governor suggested to Ignatius that he drop the whole matter; so did other friends and even his own companions. They all knew that these men were highly placed in the offices of the Holy See and had powerful friends. He absolutely refused. Slander was slander and the apostolic work of the companions would be harmed if the slander were just swept under the rug, no matter how sumptuous that rug might be. Ignatius felt that their whole future would be jeopardized if his innocence and that of his companions were not legally and publicly affirmed. Otherwise, the charge of heresy would be there lingering in the air around the group. So Ignatius requested a written decision. The cardinal and the governor both turned deaf ears to him. One of the ringleaders, who had been a notary of the Holy See, was able, with the help of several auditors of the curia and several other prominent individuals, to back up the two prelates in their refusal to act. Meanwhile, Ignatius and the companions got people from all the cities in which they had been working to send formal written testimonials to their doctrinal orthodoxy, their blameless lives, and their apostolic zeal.

Pope Paul III was away from Rome at the time. So everyone waited. No one any longer openly accused the companions of heresy, but Ignatius could not get an official judgment of innocence. The Pope returned to Rome on July 24, 1538, from a trip to Nice, where he had persuaded Charles V and Francis I to conclude a truce in their interminable and devastating wars. He was in excellent spirits, and Ignatius took advantage of his joyous mood to get a request to him through a friend, probably Cardinal Contarini, that the affair finally come to a formal conclusion. Paul III agreed, but nothing happened. Then two of the companions, probably Favre and Laínez, at one of their regular theological disputations before the Pope, reminded him again of Ignatius's request. Paul III replied that the companions had been investigated more than enough and that the slanders were, as clear as day, just that. So much for the present.

Up to this point, then, Ignatius had been unable to get a written declaration of any kind. So he took the last step. Paul III

had gone to Frascati in mid-August of 1538. Ignatius followed him to the papal residence and asked for an audience. (This may have been the first actual face-to-face meeting of Paul III and Ignatius.) He himself in a letter told what happened:

I talked alone with His Holiness in his apartment a whole hour. Then, while speaking at length to him about our designs and intentions, I related clearly how many times judicial proceedings had been taken against me. . . . I begged His Holiness, in the name of all my companions, to have a remedy devised, in order that our doctrine and manner of life should be investigated and examined by whatsoever ordinary judge His Holiness would appoint."<sup>16</sup>

He then asked again for a formal judgment. The Pope took the request well, gave firm orders to the governor's office to get on with the investigation immediately, and then for the next several weeks spoke in public quite favorably of these masters from Paris. The governor had to get down to business now. The testimonials were presented; more came from Venice. In Rome at the time were officials from Paris, Vicenza, and Venice; by good luck, the vicar general from Toledo, Figueroa, was also present, the very man who had imprisoned Ignatius in Alcalá years before and had presided at two of his judicial processes there.

By now it was early November 1538, and work came to a halt at the papal court for the spectacular festivities attending the triumphant arrival in Rome on November 3 of Madama, Margaret of Austria, the sixteen-year-old natural daughter of Emperor Charles V. (She was later to be a penitent and a firm friend of Ignatius, who was also called in to help keep peace in the family.) Now she was to be married the next day, November 4, to Ottavio Farnese, the thirteen-year-old grandson of the Pope. To celebrate the occasion of the marriage with proper splendor, dancing, fireworks, banquets, races (horse, bull, and buffalo), much of it paid for by the Holy See, went on day after day for the next week or more, ending with the main festival, including a magnificent pa-

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<sup>16</sup> Letter to Isabel Roser, December 19, 1538, *EppIgn* 1:137–44, and *Narrationes scriptæ*, 4–14.



rade with twelve floats, city officials, hundreds of mounted citizens, and uncounted merry-makers on foot.

After this extravaganza, work resumed, and finally on November 18, 1538, the official judgment came down. In it the governor, Conversini, clearly stated that Ignatius and his companions had been attacked and their teachings and the Exercises had been called heretical and contrary to the teachings of the Church. In virtue of his office and at the request of the Pope, the papal governor had investigated all these allegations carefully and had discovered that all the accusations and rumors were false. Therefore, he declared Ignatius and his companions not guilty. Indeed, not only were they not guilty, said he, but their lives and their teachings were shining examples; and so he urged all to look upon them as Catholics and completely free from every suspicion.<sup>17</sup> Ignatius personally asked that the several accusers not be named or punished, a request that was not granted. The slanderers received rigorous sentences. At the same time, Ignatius immediately had notarized copies of the decision made and dispatched them without delay to friends and benefactors everywhere, even to his family at Loyola.

No wonder that early in the *Exercises* Ignatius puts the remark "it should be presupposed that every good Christian ought to be more eager to put a good interpretation on a neighbor's statement than to condemn it."<sup>18</sup>

This incident has occupied considerable space in this paper, because it is almost paradigmatic for all the relations of Ignatius with the Holy See and because in its practical concreteness it complements other more abstract statements. Ignatius was undoubtedly and thoroughly committed to the service of the Church and of the pope as the person who had universal responsibility for that Church; but he was at the same time as tenacious as a bulldog in

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<sup>17</sup> This judicial declaration can be found in *Fontes documentales de S. Ignatio de Loyola*, ed. Cándido de Dalmases, S.J., *Monumenta Ignatiana*, vol. 115 of MHSI (Rome: Historical Institute of the Society of Jesus, 1977), 556f.

<sup>18</sup> *SpEx*, §22.

seeing that those relations were based on fact and truth about himself and his companions, who, it must be remembered, were not yet the Society of Jesus, but a group known simply as "reformed priests."

Between November 18, 1538, the time of the official judgment on Ignatius and his companions, and November 23, with their names now completely cleared and with no further prospect of going to the Holy Land, they put themselves at the service of the Pope for the good of the Church. Paul III was all too eager to use these "reformed priests," to whom he had somewhat earlier remarked: "Why do you have such a desire to go to Jerusalem? Italy is a good and true Jerusalem if your desire is to bring forth fruit in God's church."<sup>19</sup> Once the Pope began to send them out into the vineyard, the question arose fairly quickly whether in the future they were to be sent as individuals or as members in some sense of a corporate body. From the urgency of this question arose the "Deliberatio primorum patrum" ("The Deliberation of the First Fathers") in 1539. Their conclusion, of course, was to establish themselves as a corporate body, and they commissioned Ignatius to draw up the first sketch or basic outline of their group and its aims, the first Formula of the Institute, the "Quinque capitula" ("Five Chapters"). Right at the beginning of the second chapter is the statement that "this entire Society and each one individually are campaigning for God under faithful obedience to His Holiness, Paul III, and to his successors and are thus under the command of the Vicar of Christ and his divine power. . . ."<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Dalmases (*Ignatius*, 463) here quotes Bobadilla, from his autobiography in *Narrationes scriptæ ab anno 1574 ad initium sæculi xvii*, ed. Cándido de Dalmases, S.J., vol. 3 of *Fontes Narrativi de S. Ignatio de Loyola*, vol. 85 of MHSI (Rome: Historical Institute of the Society of Jesus, 1960), 327.

<sup>20</sup> The original Latin text is in Ignatius of Loyola, *Constitutiones Societatis Iesu*, vol. 1 of *Monumenta Ignatiana*, vol. 63 of MHSI (Rome: Historical Institute of the Society of Jesus, 1960), 16–20. The most recent commentary in English is Antonio M. de Aldama, S.J., *The Formula of the Institute: Notes for a Commentary*, trans. Ignacio Echániz, S.J. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1990).

The Pope liked the “*Quinque capitula*” and ordered the formal papal document approving the Society to be drawn up. All was not so easy; it took more than a year to gain this approval. In the face of the strenuous opposition of two of the cardinals of the Holy See, Ignatius did two things. First, he promised the celebration of three thousand Masses. Then, to change the minds of the two, he enlisted the aid of some very powerful friends, secular rulers, cardinals, archbishops, and the King of Portugal, the last of whom attempted to get the King of France and the Emperor to join him. Ignatius even asked Costanza Farnese, the daughter of the Pope, for help. The prayers and the pleadings, the pressure and the reasoning succeeded. The cardinals withdrew their opposition.

On September 27, 1540, Paul III signed the document of papal approval of the Society of Jesus, *Regimini militantis Ecclesiæ*. This was only the first of what can seem a surprising number of papal documents dealing with the Society in the following years up to the death of Ignatius. It should not be so surprising if we keep in mind two basic facts. Ignatius and the early Society needed the constant support of the pope, and the popes in turn had in the Society an extraordinary instrument directly at hand for their projects. The Society needed papal protection. It was new and small and utterly surprising in some of its features, so unlike those traditionally associated with religious life. Ignatius wanted the assurance of continuing papal approval, both because he felt the need of a bulwark against the objections that would continue to be raised even after his death and also because he genuinely saw in these papal documents the sign of divine approval. Experiencing this unexpected phenomenon in the Rome of that time, a new body of highly educated, fervent, mobile men who deliberately eschewed place and privilege, the Pope was happy to solidify and protect their structure and work as he made use of them. The most important of those documents are the following. *Iniunctum nobis* (1544) removed the limit of sixty professed members set down in *Regimini*. *Exposcit nobis* (1546) sanctioned the acceptance of coadjutors into the Society. *Pastoralis officii* (1548) approved the *Spiritual Exercises*. *Licet debitum* (1548) conferred a whole sea of privileges—“mare



magnum," they called it—on the Society for its apostolic work. All of these came from Paul III. In 1550 the second revised and definitive Formula of the Institute was approved by Julius III in *Exposcit debitum*. Later, in 1552, this pope gave Jesuits the power to absolve from heresy, even bypassing the local bishop's court. Obviously, all these privileges in turn forged a bond of gratitude to the popes (even if some of them also infuriated bishops and other religious orders).

### 3. Ignatius as General: Examples of His Relations with the Popes

**T**he third part of this presentation will deal with some specific examples of the ways in which Ignatius as general of the Society acted in his relations with the popes. They do not make up an exhaustive catalog of such actions, but rather they illustrate the general tenor of those relations.

Once the new religious order had received papal approval, the first item on the agenda for the ten companions was to elect their superior general. After twice refusing it, Ignatius accepted his election on April 19, 1541. Three days later, on April 22, the six companions present in Rome made the vows that constituted them members of the Society of Jesus. They promised "to God almighty and to the sovereign pontiff, his vicar on earth; . . . poverty, chastity and obedience, according to way of life contained in the Bull of the Society of our Lord Jesus and in its constitutions, already declared or to be declared"; and they promised "moreover, a special obedience to the sovereign pontiff in matters relating to missions as inscribed in the Bull."<sup>21</sup>

Next, there were constitutions to be written. They occupied Ignatius for all the years from now until his death in 1556, and even at that time they were, according to his own mind, still "open." It is not the purpose of this essay—and indeed it is too brief—to go in any way into a documentary history of the Consti-

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<sup>21</sup> *Narrationes scriptæ*, 20f.



tutions or of what they themselves might directly or indirectly say about Ignatius's relations with the pope. It is perfectly obvious that Ignatius thought that reverence and obedience to the pope were central to those Constitutions.<sup>22</sup> Rather, it will simply recount several examples of the case in which that central value had to be reconciled with another important value, the refusal of any ecclesiastical dignities for members of the Society.<sup>23</sup> Ignatius was adamant about this. Only in the case of the three missionary bishops to be sent to "Prester John" in Ethiopia, a quixotic venture from which the King of Portugal and Ignatius hoped for great things for the Church, did Ignatius agree to allow Jesuits to be ordained bishops.

This question of ecclesiastical dignities and one other different case provide several clear examples in which papal intentions came into conflict with Ignatius's position on the matter. Those instances help illustrate how reverence and obedience were to be carried out in act when he and the pope disagreed on whether this was a way that the Society could best serve the Church. Ignatius opposed the plans of Paul III, Julius III, Marcellus II, and Paul IV on this matter of ecclesiastical offices. The cases narrated here involved the acceptance of the cardinalate by three Jesuits: Claude Jay, one of the first companions, who was also slated to become bishop of Trieste; Francis Borgia; and Diego Laínez, also one of the first companions, who was in line for a bishopric as well. Nadal called the whole problem the "episcopal tribulations,"<sup>24</sup> and at least five Jesuits were offered bishoprics while Ignatius was alive.

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<sup>22</sup> At the same time, we should recall his very direct 1549 comment to Salmerón, Jay, and Canisius in the instructions he gave them as he sent them to Germany and to the University of Ingolstadt to help the Catholics there. "Let them defend the Apostolic See and its authority and draw men to true obedience to it in a way that they not be, like papists [*tanquam papiste*], less credible through rash defenses." *EppIgn* 12:244.

<sup>23</sup> See *Constitutions*, [857] and [756].

<sup>24</sup> Jerome Nadal, S.J., *Epistolæ*, 4 vols., MHSI (Madrid, 1902) 2:3. For more detail on all these cases, see the book by Jerome Aixala, S.J., *Black and Red S.J.* (Bombay: Messenger Office, 1968). This work gives further references over and above the ones cited here.

Lastly, there is a very curious case involving an individual Jesuit, a private request, a *monitorium* from a papal commission, and Ignatius's reaction to it.

### Claude Jay and the Bishopric of Trieste

In 1546, Ferdinand, the king of the Romans, brother of and later successor to Charles V as emperor, offered the See of Trieste to Jay. He refused it. The bishop of Ljubljana (Laibach) in present-day Slovenia, the agent of the King, persisted with his importunities and gave no peace to Jay for several months. Jay wrote to Ignatius: "The day that his Lordship . . . arrived here in Venice from Trent, he nearly drowned in the Adriatic Sea; and the following day he tried to drown me in the sea of episcopal grandeur. Praise be to God, both of us escaped the tempest!"<sup>25</sup> Jay himself wrote to Pope Paul III in December 1546 with strong arguments against the appointment of a Jesuit to a bishopric. Meanwhile, Ignatius also intervened in the matter. He addressed a four-point memorandum to King Ferdinand, showing how the acceptance of ecclesiastical dignities would be a death blow to the new Society.<sup>26</sup> Letters, however, were not enough for Ignatius. He personally visited three of the most influential curial cardinals and the Pope's secretary, Maffeo. He also went directly to Paul III himself and explained the situation at length. The Pope reacted in a kindly manner and praised the Society, but added that he had already committed himself to the appointment and that his decision was surely from the Holy Spirit. At the end of the meeting, Paul III quoted the verse from Proverbs 21, "The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord." He said that he would pray about the matter and recommended that Ignatius do the same.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *Epistolæ P. . . . Jaji . . .*, vol. 24 of MHSI (Madrid, 1903), 317.

<sup>26</sup> *EppIgn* 1:450–53. See also William Young, S.J., *Letters of St. Ignatius of Loyola* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1959), 111–13.

<sup>27</sup> *EppIgn* 1:460–67. See also José M. Aicardo, S.J., *Comentario a las Constituciones de la Compañía de Jesús*, 6 vols. (Madrid, 1919–32) 4:26–29. This is an old and in some ways outdated commentary; but it is interesting in that

Ignatius prayed and he had others pray too. But he also used every human means and every available influence. He went back to the cardinals, especially Cardinal Carpi, the first and only “official protector” of the Society. After hearing Ignatius, Carpi wrote to King Ferdinand, but his letter was without result. Ignatius also had the viceroy of Sicily get the Emperor’s secretary to bring up the question with the Pope. He did so, but this had no better results; the Pope’s mind was unchanged. In the few days before the consistory at which the appointment was to be announced publicly, Ignatius went around by day and by night to visit every single one of the cardinals in Rome to urge them to persuade the Pope not to make the appointment. He managed to see all but two of the cardinals. The evening before the consistory, December 9, 1546, desperate for any last help that he might be able to obtain, Ignatius went to Madama, Margaret of Austria, the wife of the Pope’s grandson, and asked her to write a note to His Holiness, her grandfather-in-law, urging him to delay the affair until the viceroy could write to King Ferdinand. Family influence worked. The Pope agreed to Margaret’s request. Having gained some time, Ignatius then had the viceroy and Margaret and Cardinal Carpi write to King Ferdinand, and Ignatius added his own letter to the barrage. In addition, he wrote to the Jesuits who were at Trent and asked them to write to the King also. At this point Ferdinand capitulated. His ambassador in Rome, who previously had been told to push in every way for the appointment of Jay to Trieste, got orders officially on January 4, 1547, no longer to insist on the matter. Ignatius had earlier received unofficial news of this, and in a letter of December 22, 1546, he wrote, “More by divine grace than by human diligence, though efforts have not been wanting on our part with God’s help, a stop has been put to this matter for the time being and we are hopeful for the future.”<sup>28</sup> But perhaps the royal

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the author, using the volumes of the MHSI then available, tries to show how Ignatius put the Constitutions (still being written, of course) into practice.

<sup>28</sup> *EppIgn* 1:454.



ambassador should have the last word. He wrote on December 11, 1546, to Ferdinand, "Your majesty may believe me when I say that there have been more rumors and more negotiations about this bishopric than if it had been the supreme pontificate."<sup>29</sup>

### Francis Borgia and the Cardinalate

In October 1550 Francis Borgia, the duke of Gandia and viceroy of Catalonia, came to Rome to visit with Ignatius, who was, though most people did not yet know it, his religious superior. Francis had entered the Society two years earlier and had taken his vows. But he had also received permission to keep this a secret and to retain for three years his position as a prince. During that time he arranged for the marriage of his older children, settled his affairs, and did his theological studies, receiving a doctorate in August 1550. Now he was in Rome and Pope Julius III, with the eager consent of his whole consistory of cardinals, wanted to make Borgia himself a cardinal. Francis's longtime friend, Emperor Charles V, had also been exerting pressure for this. After all, Borgia was the great-grandson of Pope Alexander VI on his father's side and of King Ferdinand the Catholic on his mother's. Ignatius learned that the matter was settled as far as the Pope and the cardinals were concerned. As in the earlier case of Jay, he immediately betook himself both to prayer and to friends. The Jesuit community in Rome was told to give three special days to such prayer. Ignatius himself said that on the third day the matter was so clear to him that "even if the whole world were to fall prostrate at his feet, he would try his utmost to prevent the promotion."<sup>30</sup>

Seeing that his very presence in Rome intensified the pressure to make him a cardinal, Borgia fled the city in February 1551 and returned to the Basque country. Once the permission of the

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<sup>29</sup> Pietro Tacchi Venturi, S.J., *Storia della Compagnia di Gesù in Italia*, 3 vols. (Rome: La Civiltà Cattolica, 1950–1951) 2B:101.

<sup>30</sup> Aixala, *Black and Red*, 50. See also *Epistolæ mixtæ ex variis Europæ locis*, vol. 17 of MHSI (Madrid, 1900) 3:403–6.



Emperor arrived, he resigned all his titles, estates, and income and then in May of the same year openly began to lead the Jesuit way of life with the very public gesture of carrying around a beggar's sack in which he collected alms for the poor.<sup>31</sup> Ignatius, meanwhile, had succeeded in persuading Julius III not to make Borgia a cardinal.

The next year brought a second attempt. Charles V again urged the Pope to make Borgia a cardinal, and Julius III was strongly interested in granting the Emperor's request. Again Ignatius went to the Pope and persuaded him not to proceed with his plan.

In 1554 the question came up a third time, now from the new king of Spain, Philip II. He too urged the Pope to make Francis a cardinal. At this point, Ignatius thought he might erect a further defense by telling Borgia to take the vow in the Society against the acceptance of ecclesiastical dignities. Apparently Borgia was the first member of the Society to take that vow. Then Borgia went to Princess Juana, the sister of Philip II (and herself secretly a Jesuit scholastic), and urged her to persuade her brother to give up the idea. Her frequent letters to Philip in London had the desired effect. In any case, there were no further attempts to make Francis another Borgia cardinal.

Most interesting, not only in itself but also for the light it sheds on our understanding of Ignatian discernment, was a 1552 letter to Borgia in which Ignatius expressed his conviction that this initiative should be resisted. He told Borgia that he wanted to give an account of his own experience, of how he came to the firm determination to do what he did.

I held and now hold that it is the divine will for me to oppose this [appointment], even though others might think otherwise and bestow this dignity on you. There would be no contradiction at all involved; for the same Divine Spirit is able to move me to that action for certain reasons, and for other reasons to move others to the contrary action and to bring about the result to which the em-

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<sup>31</sup> *Litteræ quadrimestres*, 7 vols., MHSI (Madrid and Rome, 1894–1932) 1:493.

peror was pointing. May God our Lord always in everything do what will be to his greatest praise and glory.<sup>32</sup>

Obviously Ignatius supposes that Church authority has the final say, but clearly only when it was really final.

### **Diego Laínez: Several Bishoprics and the Cardinalate**

To turn now to a third early Jesuit threatened with a prelacy, it seems that Diego Laínez was the very first member of this still quite young Society to be offered the episcopal dignity. In 1545 the bishop of Ljubljana, this time impressed by Laínez's sermons in Rome, tried to have the Jesuit appointed his coadjutor with the right of succession. Laínez resolutely refused and the bishop gave up the plan.<sup>33</sup> There are stories that, besides being offered that diocese, he was also offered the archdioceses of Florence and Pisa; and Salmerón says that he was offered the bishopric of Majorca.

While there seems to have been relatively little problem in simply refusing those dignities, it was clear in 1555, the year before Ignatius died, that Laínez was going to be made a cardinal. Cardinal Marcello Cervini, to the joy of the reforming groups in the Church, had been elected Pope Marcellus II. A good friend of the Society, he intended to use its members to implement his reform proposals. The story was rife in Rome that he was planning to confer the cardinalate upon Laínez, whom he had come to know and admire at Trent, and to place him in the forefront of his reform movement. The death of the Pope within a few weeks of his election put an end to the plan.

But when Cardinal Gian Pietro Carafa was elected as Pope Paul IV on May 23, 1555, the possibility of a cardinalate for Laínez became even more imminent. Paul IV detested almost all Spaniards

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<sup>32</sup> *EppIgn* 4:283–85. For this translation see Jules Toner, S.J., *Discerning God's Will* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1991), 47f. See also Young, *Letters*, 257f.

<sup>33</sup> Mario Scaduto, S.J., *L'epoca di Giacomo Laínez*, vol. 3 of *Storia della Compagnia di Gesù in Italia* (Rome: La Civiltà Cattolica, 1964), 133.

and, as we have seen before, had more than his share of ill feeling toward Ignatius; but he regarded Laínez with the highest respect and even affection. In early 1556, bypassing the Council of Trent, he made public his own personal reform plan for the Roman Curia and from there for the Church. The first part of the plan was to create a special commission of cardinals and theologians, one of whose members was to be Laínez. The Pope commanded Laínez in virtue of holy obedience not to leave Rome and to keep himself ready for any responsibility. He even insisted that Laínez move his residence into a set of rooms in the papal palace. Responsive to the wishes of the Pope, Laínez moved into the papal palace but stayed there only one night. Ignatius immediately sent out a letter to the Society asking for special prayers "until further notice for an intention concerning one of the Society, which may be of great moment for the divine service and the common good."<sup>34</sup> Laínez himself had already asked several people for their help in stopping this move toward the cardinalate. Among them was Cardinal von Truchsess, with whom Laínez had been working at the Council of Trent. Laínez also wrote a type of To-whom-it-may-concern statement, seemingly to be sent out to prominent friends, asking them to pray and use their influence to fend off this possibility. Ribadeneira, for his part, says that Ignatius told him:

If our Lord does not interfere, we shall have Master Laínez as a cardinal. But I guarantee you that if this does happen, it will occur with such a protest that the whole world will understand whether the Society seeks red hats and miters or strives to avoid them.<sup>35</sup>

Fortunately, the prayers, the letters, and the influence prevailed. Finally, Paul IV backed off from the project of giving him the red hat. Then Ignatius died in 1556 and Laínez was elected General of the Society. The Pope continued to consult Laínez throughout the rest of his pontificate, but he was not above railing at him occasionally and ordering him and the First General Congregation to make

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<sup>34</sup> *Epplgn* 10:311.

<sup>35</sup> Pedro Ribadeneira, S.J., *Vida del P. maestro Diego Laínez*, ed. E. Rey, S.J. (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1945) 1:10.



changes in the Constitutions. On his deathbed Paul IV summoned Laínez and in his presence publicly regretted his nepotism and the warfare into which it had plunged the Holy See.<sup>36</sup> With the death of Paul IV, there was no more talk of a cardinal's hat for Laínez.

How exceedingly strong was this opposition to accepting the prelacy is clear from a later commentary by Jerome Nadal, one of the closest collaborators of Ignatius, on the section of the Constitutions dealing with the matter.

Only the Supreme Pontiff can compel the Society in this regard. In such instances, every manner and means of resisting and impeding such an intention of the pontiff is to be expended and exercised, every stone (as they say) to be turned lest such a dignity be imposed. We are not to cease working toward this end or give up our efforts until we have exhausted every possibility. This will not be verified until the Apostolic See expressly obliges us under pain of mortal sin and will obviously brook no further resistance.<sup>37</sup>

### Ottaviano Cesari and a Mother's Love

This most interesting case, dating back to 1554, does not deal with ecclesiastical dignities, but rather with a mother's love. It puts in vivid terms several values and the way Ignatius acted in accord with them. Cesari's family, especially his mother, had been much against his entering the Society. He fled from his home in Naples to Sicily and entered the Society there. The Italian edition

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<sup>36</sup> The story then takes an interesting turn. If the rumors are to be believed, in the interminable conclave that followed for almost four months in 1559, Laínez was considered a possibility for the papacy by some of the cardinal-electors. It is certain that Laínez was summoned into the conclave by Cardinal von Truchsess. From there the rumors grew. Modern historians such as Scaduto think that, as Ribadeneira described the incident in his *Vida*, he exaggerated the whole affair. It seems to be the case that a group of the cardinals surely thought of Laínez as a candidate; that twelve of them voted for him at one time may simply be a rumor.

<sup>37</sup> Jerome Nadal, *Scholia in Constitutiones Societatis Iesu*, ed. Manuel Ruiz Jurado, S.J. (Granada, 1976), 500. I am indebted for this quotation to John W. O'Malley, S.J., from his soon-to-be-published book *The Early Jesuits* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993).



of the writings of St. Ignatius gathers together a series of seven letters from Ignatius to the young Ottaviano's father; to the Duke of Monteleone, for whom the father was secretary; to his mother; and to the mother's confessor, all responding to the pressures on the young man's vocation.<sup>38</sup> Once her son finally became a member of the Society, Ottaviano's mother wanted him back home in Naples as a Jesuit, and she importuned the local superior at Palermo, the provincial of Sicily, and Ignatius himself in Rome. Ignatius thought that returning under such circumstances would imperil the young man's vocation, but promised to send him to Naples later. For the mother, a member of the Neapolitan nobility, that was not enough. She appealed to the Pope. Julius III was wise enough not to get involved personally. He appointed a curial commission of three cardinals, including the redoubtable Carafa, soon to be pope. They wrote and dispatched to Ignatius a *monitorium* deciding that the young Ottaviano should be sent to Naples. Accordingly, on August 20, 1554, Ignatius gave him permission to go as soon as convenient and issued an order under obedience that the local superior in Palermo and his provincial in Sicily should not prevent the journey.

But at the same time he commissioned Polanco to write to Cesari's superior on August 22, 1554, telling him that the young man indeed had permission but was not under any obligation to go to Naples, and that the permission continued to be against the judgment of Ignatius.<sup>39</sup> In even stronger terms, Ignatius had earlier told Polanco on June 9, 1554, to write to Cesari's provincial, telling him that Ignatius thought the Holy See's *monitorium* was both invalid and illicit, and that for two reasons: First, it came not from the full commission of cardinals but from only one of them, Carafa, to whom the decision had been delegated; and so "neither in conscience nor in the external forum did the document have any

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<sup>38</sup> Mario Gioia, S.J., ed., *Gli scritti de Ignazio de Loyola* (Turin: UTET, 1977), 989–96.

<sup>39</sup> *EppIgn* 7:421, 441.

force."<sup>40</sup> Second, following examples early in his life, Ignatius had Polanco draw up an official document in which he openly stated his position and the reason for it. Because he considered the visit to Naples a peril to Cesari's vocation and to his soul, "to order the young man to go to Naples he would not and could not in conscience do."<sup>41</sup> The most he would or could do, and in fact did, was to grant him permission for the journey and the visit, without at all agreeing that it was a good or a wise thing to do. The young Ottaviano did go to Naples, where Ignatius in the last months of his life wrote two gracious letters to him.<sup>42</sup> Sometime later, after Ignatius had died, Cesari left the Society.

## Questions and Conclusions

What do these several examples of Ignatius's relations with the popes prove? To that simple question, the answer is equally simple: Of themselves they prove nothing. But, simply put, examples such as these are very important for our understanding of how Ignatius really understood reverence for the pope, obedience to his wishes, service of the Holy See, and "thinking with the Church." For the first and thirteenth of the Rules for Thinking with the Church should not be read as if they gave the only and the definitive answer to the theory and practice of Jesuit obedience, or even to the theory and practice of that obedience as understood by Ignatius; instead, those rules must be interpreted in the context of concrete examples of Ignatius's practice of thinking with the Church and responding to the wishes

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid. 7:94.

<sup>41</sup> *EppIgn* 7:420; also see Juan Alonso de Polanco, *Vita Ignatii Loiolæ et . . . historia*, 6 vols. (Madrid, 1896) 4:17, 212. These volumes are known as Polanco's *Chronicon*.

<sup>42</sup> Gioia, *Scritti*, 99f.

of the Holy See.<sup>43</sup> This brief historical presentation can claim no more than that; it provides part of such a context. Anyone searching for an apt phrase that would epitomize in a few words Ignatius's attitude in this complicated question might find most appropriate the term "realistic reverence." Neither, of course, do these examples give us absolute guidelines for today, for example, on the question of how the Society of Jesus ought best to respond when some of its members are offered bishoprics.

What do these examples illustrate? Equally simply, they illustrate that the relationship of Ignatius of Loyola to the popes of his time and to the Holy See in general is not exhausted or even adequately portrayed by the rather familiar written documents on the subject. Rather, here are examples of the ways in which Ignatius actually carried out his understanding of reverence for the pope, obedience to his wishes, and service of the Church through the papacy. They assume such attitudes already in place and exemplify what they mean in practice.

So what do these examples suggest? First, they do not suggest, in case one might superficially think so, that Ignatius said one thing and did another. Rather, they suggest that the lived reality of his relationship to the papacy was far more complex than we have been accustomed to believe it.

That reality involved a set of values, attitudes, and practices in continuing interaction. There was gratitude to the Holy See in general and, especially and personally, to several of the popes, in

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<sup>43</sup> *SpEx*, §353 and §365: "*The First Rule*. With all judgment of our own put aside, we ought to keep our minds disposed and ready to be obedient in everything to the true Spouse of Christ our Lord, which is our holy Mother the hierarchical Church."*The Thirteenth*. To keep ourselves right in all things, we ought to hold fast to this principle: What seems to me to be white, I will believe to be black if the hierarchical Church thus determines it. For we believe that between Christ our Lord, the Bridegroom, and the Church, his Spouse, there is the one same Spirit who governs and guides us for the salvation of our souls. For it is by the same Spirit and Lord of ours who gave the ten commandments that our Holy Mother Church is guided and governed."



particular, Paul III and Julius III, for the support they gave to this new and untried religious order. There was genuine fear of what Paul IV might do to the Society. But with equally genuine piety and reverence, the dying Ignatius sent for Paul IV's blessing. There was a determination with both friend and foe to uphold to the very last the distinctive characteristics of the Society. There was the use of both prayer to God and political persuasion by friends to influence the popes in their actions toward the Society. No matter what the papal reactions of warmth or coldness proved to be, Ignatius showed a determination to have a paper-trail, a documentation of process and decision. Above all, there was a set of interlocking personal relationships that Ignatius had with the popes, with their curia, with their officials and relatives and friends<sup>44</sup> that became less and less possible in later times, given the expansion of the Society and the increasing bureaucratization of the papacy. Finally, underlying all of this was his feeling of being at home in a Church composed of sinners, of saints, and of everything in between, but a Church that was still, as Ignatius says in various places, our mother, a hierarchical body, Christ's kingdom, the community of the faithful, the vineyard of the Lord in which the Society was to work, Christ's mystical body governed on earth by his vicar.<sup>45</sup> Ignatius wanted to serve that Church through the pope, because the pope had the most all-embracing view of the needs of the Church, the spouse of Christ, who above all and beyond all was the term of service and love.

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<sup>44</sup> The rapid acceptance of and trust in the Society, despite its very unusual features, were surely owing in part to the fact that Ignatius and the early Jesuits with equal rapidity became very well connected in the already interconnected ecclesiastical and governmental worlds of the time. Those relationships themselves, so much due to the social background, personality, natural gifts, and reputation for holiness of Ignatius, are themselves a subject that could well use much further investigation. Dominique Bertrand, S.J.'s book *La politique de Saint Ignace de Loyola: L'analyse sociale* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1985) is an example of such an investigation.

<sup>45</sup> For example, *SpEx*, §352 and §91–95, Young, *Letters*, 367–72, and *Constitutions*, Part 7, entitled "The Distribution of the Incorporated Members in Christ's Vineyard and Their Relations with Their Fellowmen."



As has been well said, Ignatius's approach to the Church is "dramatic." The same might be said of his approach to the pope.

"This term would suitably express how true union with the Church is something to be sought by working through all the prejudices, affective limitations and sinfulness of individual Christians and of representatives of the Church. . . . [U]nion with the Church takes place in human encounter . . . [where] the various phases of a drama can be played out: . . . development, conflict, tension, crisis, catastrophe, and final reconciliation and denouement. Ignatius's actual experience of the Church then seems best interpreted as an encouragement to take part in this drama. . . . However, where people lack the courage to play out the drama . . . [then] an idolatrous tendency is manifesting itself, whereby people are tempted to absolutize visible structure."<sup>46</sup>

To a person reading this essay, what questions might occur for the Society of Jesus today? To begin with, how are the papacy and its offices and practices now the same as and also different than they were in the time of Ignatius? In this instance in particular, how have the lives and personalities and activities of the popes, especially since the Counter-Reformation and the French Revolution, for example, affected our understanding of the papacy? How have the quite differing ecclesiologies of Cardinal Bellarmine, for example, on the one hand and of Vatican II on the other affected the Holy See itself and the Society of Jesus and their relationships? To respond to those questions adequately would be to take seriously the action of God in history and the need for ongoing serious historical and theological scholarship. It would also be to take seriously Ignatius's experience with the Holy See, not as externally normative, but as something that should stimulate our own imaginations and thoughts and practices in our own experience with the Holy See.

Next, how might one best "vindicate" the Society of Jesus today publicly and officially, as Ignatius did, and still maintain a

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<sup>46</sup> Raymond Schwager, S.J., *Das dramatische Kirchenverständnis bei Ignatius von Loyola* (Zurich, 1970), 186f, as quoted in Philip Endean, S.J., "Ignatius and Church Authority," *Ignatian Horizons 1491–1991, The Way*, Supplement 70 (Spring, 1991), 89.

reverence for the entities against which or at least to which one is vindicating it? Who does this? Most fundamentally, why should it be done or should it be done at all? It is well to remember that Ignatius regularly vindicated himself and the Society publicly and officially when he judged it appropriate, not for his own sake or for the sake of the Society, but for the sake of spreading the Gospel and helping souls. It is a difficult and delicate thing to do, but that is not a reason for refusing to do it. Especially is this the case because at times well-intentioned Christians, both Catholic and others, will say: "I agree with and understand and accept your position, but you are not really expressing Catholicism. You are different; you are a Jesuit." It is as if the Society of Jesus itself were on the fringes of the Church and perhaps flirting with heresy. Ignatius says that, in imitation of Jesus and out of love for him, we ought to accept being treated and accounted as fools even when we give no occasion for it; but are there not at least some times when we ought to make it very clear that we have not given such an occasion? He certainly thought so and acted accordingly.

How does one judge orthodoxy or decide on orthopraxis when one needs to call upon both external and internal criteria, upon several central conflicting values, and upon "Church" conceived of since Vatican II as embracing more than simply the Roman Catholic Church? To serve helpfully in right thinking and right practice, that is to say, to make a judgment about orthodoxy and to decide on orthopraxis, it is not enough today to appeal to the texts of Ignatius as isolated from his practices, for example, the Rules for Thinking with the Church. It may be even less helpful to appeal to them as interpreted by such early indirect and, therefore, perhaps even more powerful influences as Ribadeneira's biography of Ignatius or seventeenth-century Counter-Reformation ecclesiology or nineteenth-century postrevolutionary ideas. Especially is this true in the light of the Church's growth in its own self-understanding since Vatican II.

Beyond simple orthodoxy or orthopraxis, how does one best think **with** and **in** the Church, depending not only on how one conceives of the Church today but also on how one experiences the

Church? We should take seriously Ignatius's own experience of the Church and, also seriously, our own experience of it and, seriously once again, the experiences of the Church on the part of those with whom we engage in dialogue and in practice as we pursue our apostolates. How do all of these people who are in partnership with us in helping souls and spreading the Gospel—even if sometimes only an indirect and implicit partnership exists—how do they experience the Church? This is not automatically to validate their experience. It is, rather, to say that the experience of the Society of Jesus alone or the experience of clerics or religious alone or of highly placed ecclesiastics alone is not necessarily normative.

In the practical concrete order, what do "spreading the word of God" and "helping souls" mean today? The response to this final question will condition all the previous questions and their responses. Everything that Ignatius did in thinking with the Church and acting in it as he thought best was for the sake of that central purpose of spreading the word of God and helping souls. Of course, he was concerned about how best to serve the Roman Pontiff. But he was thus concerned for the Roman Pontiff, not for the pope's own personal sake, but for the Roman Pontiff as the servant of the universal Church, the spouse of Christ. To serve the pope and the Church for those reasons was, finally, to serve the Lord alone. If Jesuits have been and are "in the most difficult and extreme fields, in the crossroads of ideologies, in the front line of social conflict," as Pope Paul VI said of us,<sup>47</sup> we are there, first and foremost, to serve the Lord alone. Such service conditions all of the previous questions and all of the previous answers. Obviously, it is not a service detached from or independent of the institution, the Church, within which that service is structured or of the persons who administer that institution; for neither the institution nor those persons are ends in themselves.

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<sup>47</sup> "Address of Pope Paul VI to the Members of the Thirty-second General Congregation, December 3, 1974," *Documents of the 31st and 32nd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus*, ed. John W. Padberg, S.J. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1977), 527.



To what do the examples of this paper challenge us? They might, first, ask us to look more closely at the varieties of metaphor about the Church that Ignatius employed and, more importantly, lived. Second, they might help us to disengage the Ignatian understanding of the Church and papacy from the later overlays (not necessarily wrong or bad, but not those of Ignatius himself) employed by Jesuits of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century counterreformation<sup>48</sup> and of the nineteenth-century postrevolutionary movement. Third, they might assist us in situating an Ignatian view of relationship with the pope in its own context rather than in the nineteenth-century context in which it has so often come down to us. Last and most important, these examples might serve as an invitation to try to enter into the imagination and the world of Ignatius, not to re-create that imagination and that world of the past, but rather to stimulate us to imagine and describe the relationship of Church and pope and Society of Jesus that would be faithful to Ignatius for our own times. As Schwager again says,

For [Ignatius] the hierarchical church could be a source of direct, specific inspiration, or merely provide a framework not to be over-shot, or a great deal in between. What mattered for him was . . . the recognition that it is the one divine Spirit that works in such diverse ways.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> For instance, as early as 1562 Nadal was reinforcing what some members of the Society already thought, that God "called our Father Ignatius in about the same year that Luther cast off his religious habit and contracted his scandalous marriage. . . . This makes it particularly clear to us how the Society was raised up to help the Church, in Germany, India or wherever. Thus, in that same year that Luther was called by the devil, Ignatius was called by God" (*Commentarii de Instituto S. I.*, ed. Michael Nicolau, S.J., vol. 5 of *Epistolæ et monumenta P. Hieronymi Nadal*, vol. 90 of MHSI [Rome: Historical Institute of the Society of Jesus, 1962], 780). This is high rhetoric but bad history. I am indebted to Philip Endean, S.J., for providing a reference to this quotation in a manuscript, "Luther's Pastors and the *Prete Riformati di Gesù*," 1. See also his reference to Terence O'Reilly, "Ignatius of Loyola and the Counter-Reformation: The Hagiographic Tradition," *The Heythrop Journal* 31 (1990): 439-70.

<sup>49</sup> Schwager, *Kirchenverständnis*, 152, as quoted in Endean, "Ignatius and Church Authority," 79.



In so many ways the Society of Jesus, like every other part of the Church, continues to experience the effects of the new beginnings, the *aggiornamento*, in the Church since Vatican II. The Society within a few years of its foundation was surely at the new beginnings of the Counter-Reformation and at another such turning point at the period of its restoration in a postrevolutionary Europe and an increasingly ultramontane Church. In its desire to serve the Church and the Lord in those periods, how did the Society of Jesus of the Counter-Reformation or the Society of Jesus of the Restoration "read" its sources and origins? No one, as a matter of fact, reads origins without images and without some preconceived ideas. It would be too long and arduous a task here to go into the way in which, within fifty years of Ignatius and his foundational desire to spread the Gospel and "to help souls," the Society began to read its origins and construct its images primarily around a desire "to defend the faith" in a Counter-Reformation sense and "to convert heretics." Equally arduous and long and interesting would be the effort to see what those and other terms later meant in practice in the light of a postrevolutionary nineteenth-century Church vigorously centralizing itself in symbol and activity in the Holy See and in the person of the pope. Of course, we too in our own day are equally susceptible to reading the past of the Society in particular ways that are influenced by the new beginnings of the Church since Vatican II. We are so whether we know it or not; how much better to be consciously aware of what we are doing in the present and how we have been influenced to do so by both present and past!

Perhaps Ignatius, a paradoxical mystic if there ever was one, can help us not to engage in unilateral reading of our history or of our responsibilities. He was surely the paradoxical mystic of internal personal freedom. He was also the paradoxical mystic of devoted service to a hierarchically organized Church. How do we put the two of those together? Do we not only think but also feel that we are part of a new beginning in the Church since Vatican II? At a new beginning such as is occurring since the council, do we have the courage to resurrect "dangerous memories"? Are we ready to

look more clearly at the image we have of Ignatius? Are we ready to engage for the rest of our lives personally and institutionally in the dialectic of Church-Spirit, taking both of those realities with the utmost seriousness? If the deeds of the Spirit in the Church are, indeed, so diverse, then so also are our deeds; and, as Ignatius himself said, love is proved more by deeds than by words. These deeds of Ignatius recounted in this essay exemplify a realistic reverence and obedience with which under the Roman Pontiff he could and did "serve the Lord alone and the Church, His spouse."

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor:

In this remote corner of Africa, only now could I get hold of Frank J. Houdek's *Studies* essay, "Jesuit Prayer and Jesuit Ministry." May I express my appreciation for his masterly survey as well as for the practical hints. A few thoughts, nevertheless, darted across my troubled mind.

First, for four hundred years the Society persisted in an erroneous understanding of the special charism of Jesuit prayer, a basic issue in our whole life and ministry. Second, during that period there was an unfailing output of sanctity in the Society; according to the late Ronald Knox, never from its inception to its suppression has there been a moment when a Jesuit saint (later canonized) was not alive. They all adhered strictly to the *hora integra* of morning meditation and vastly improved on it

We may puzzle over those two facts, but here is something even more specific to consider. The Society has always insisted on the two examens of conscience, St. Ignatius himself initiated this tradition. He would not readily exempt even sick people from the practice. The Borgia tradition has nothing to do with those mandatory examens. Yet, despite their being an authentic Ignatian tradition, what is happening today? In four continents I have visited, I am left with the impression that many Jesuits are less than faithful to the noon examen, even when they are absolutely free and unhampered by apostolic preoccupations. Even those on holiday with nothing to do after breakfast except to wait for the next meal can be seen watching television, reading newspapers, or just chatting when they are expected to be praying.

Don't tell me that modern Jesuits postpone the noon examen to siesta time. (I do not pretend that I am above such contradictions of life.) I do not venture to comment on the night examen, as unofficial research into this area of other people's life is neither possible nor decent. We know what importance St. Ignatius attached to these two rhythmic movements of prayer and continuous discernment of our daily doings, without which seeking and finding God in all things is only a slogan. With a large number of Jesuits, it would seem, the noon examen is the first casualty when prayer life declines. It is dropped even before the daily meditation. Why make so much of the fact that the Borgia tradition on prayer deviated from the original charism of the Society?

Has formal prayer declined in the Society? The question is usually answered in an overly tactful and half-evasive manner. For example, "You know there are many who make an extra long retreat; there are so many prayer seminars and workshops, and summer courses galore," and so on. But does the average Jesuit pray enough today? When Fr. Arrupe was asked this question at a meeting of Indian provincials in Calcutta in the early 70s, he answered with disarming modesty, "I do not know; I know only what the provincials report, and they don't seem to be sure."

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